Published by the City of Lafayette

Winter 1996
Vol. 6, No. 1

LAFAYETTE VISTAS

Public Safety Consolidation

In a report presented to the City Council in November, the Lafayette Public Safety Implementation Committee mapped out a preliminary plan to combine police and fire services and, at the same time, save local taxpayers up to $1 million annually. The report, which outlines the new department's proposed organization, operations and financing, is available for $3 at the City offices.

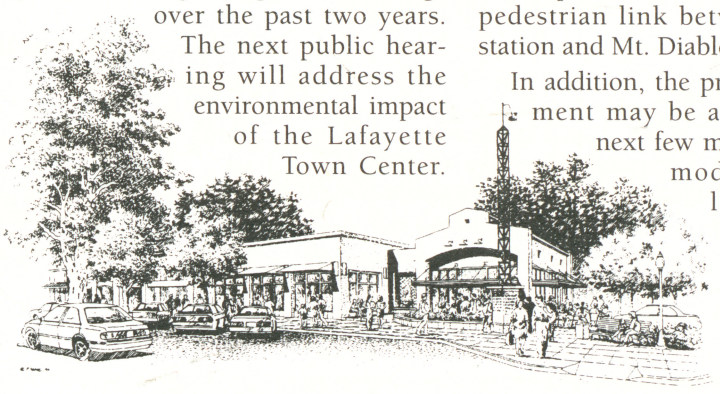
In 1991, the Lafayette City Council began investigating more efficient ways to provide public safety for residents. In 1992, the Lafayette Public Safety Committee was established and, over the past three years, many approaches were reviewed, including privatization, administrative consolidation, and a variety of efficiency measures. Only one approach, consolidation of police and fire services into one Public Safety Department, rose to the top. Under such a plan, public safety officers would be trained to provide both police and fire services. The converted firefighting personnel, which heretofore have been station-based, would now patrol the streets on a 24-hour basis.

The plan calls for shifting police and fire resources from the Sheriff's Department and the Consolidated Fire District to a locally run Public Safety Department. Lafayette taxpayers currently pay approximately $4.7 million annually for fire and police services. Under the new plan, after transition and start-up, the public safety department would cost approximately $3.7 million while providing the same or improved levels of service – a savings of $1 million.

The City Council has scheduled a public hearing for the evening of January 22 to discuss this concept in more detail. For more information, call Brandt Andersson, committee chair, at 284-5678, or Assistant City Manager Steven Falk at 284-1968.

Lafayette Town Center Takes Shape

A new development proposal for Lafayette's "BART Block," the property on Mt. Diablo Blvd. south of the Lafayette BART station, is reaching its final planning and review stages. The proposal has progressed through 21 public meetings over the past two years. The next public hearing will address the environmental impact of the Lafayette Town Center.



Though not yet scheduled at press time, the upcoming meeting will be held before the Lafayette Planning Commission.

The proposed development currently calls for up to 36 homes and approximately 25,500 square feet of retail space on 3.86 acres. Selecting the specific mix of retail tenants and fine-tuning the entire development is still underway. A decision regarding the small creek that meanders through the property is also expected. Consideration is being given to refurbishing the creek and turning it into a linear park that would be used as a pedestrian link between the BART station and Mt. Diablo Blvd.

In addition, the proposed development may be altered over the next few months to accommodate a possible land swap between the City and the developer. By exchanging the nearby city-owned "Prouty-Norseman" property for a portion of the BART Block, the City could build a public parking garage and\or a City office building near Mt.Diablo Blvd. in the heart of downtown.

The merit of these ideas is being reviewed by a special committee established by the City Council. The

(continued on page 2)

Sports Complex Eyes Lafayette Site

A major athletic club has proposed opening its doors in Lafayette. The De Silva Group, developer of the proposed sports complex, wants to build the facility on the 6.4 acres of open land on the west end of Mt. Diablo Blvd. near Orchard Nursery.

The 67,000-square-foot, two-story private sports club would include indoor basketball, racquetball and squash courts, aerobic exercise areas, a fitness room for weight training, and a large outdoor swimming pool. Secondary facilities include locker rooms, rest rooms, administrative offices, a sports bar and cafe, a pro shop, a salon, meeting rooms, child care and a 284-stall parking lot. The club would employ an average of 70 full-time people and accommodate about 3,500 members.

But before you slip into your cross-trainers, there are several issues that must be resolved. First, the land in question is zoned for residential development and many neighbors have expressed opposition to the project as it is currently drawn. In the past and on a case-by-case basis, Lafayette has allowed some recreational, educational, institutional, religious, civic and utility uses in residential zones.

Besides zoning issues, locating a business on Mt. Diablo Blvd. comes with its own set of challenges. The

(continued on page 2)

Town Center *(Continued from front page)*

committee is comprised of two planning commissioners, city staff, and representatives for the developer. A final decision on the swap will be made by the City Council.

Bob Grether, spokesperson for the developer, describes the retail space of the Lafayette Town Center as being similar to the 4th Street project in Berkeley. The final design of the Lafayette Town Center took shape following a three-county bus tour. In September, Lafayette residents, city officers and employees took part in a field trip to review other retail developments in the area to see what style would best suit Lafayette. About 35 people toured various retail sites including Market Hall in Rockridge, Solano Avenue in Albany, Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek, and many other successful and aesthetically pleasing retail spots.

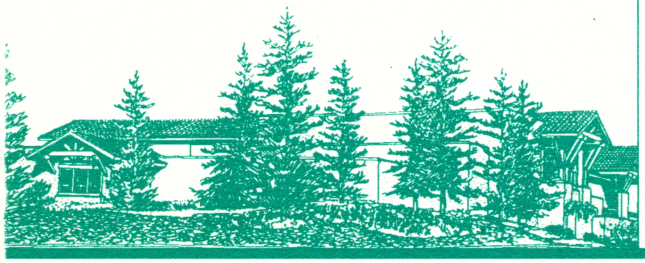
According to Grether, the new center would offer a unique mix of retail outlets, interesting pockets of outdoor space, and wide sidewalks and terraces that extend to the outdoors. Grether estimates that half of the Lafayette Town Center businesses would be food service related. The development will also include the preservation and restoration of the old brick building once occupied by Freddie's Pizza.

For information on the Lafayette Town Center or to submit your comments or suggestions, residents are encouraged to call Planning Services Manager Mike Henn at 284-1976.

Sports Complex *(Continued from front page)*

City's General Plan classifies Mt. Diablo Blvd. as a "Great Street" or gateway to Lafayette. City policy calls for the western section of Mt. Diablo Blvd. to be treated as a scenic boulevard that maintains a sense of openness. Wherever private development occurs, it must provide broad "set backs" to preserve a natural, park-like setting.

The athletic complex also faces several other hurdles including traffic, noise, lighting, and its general aesthetic impact on the community. The ongoing review of the proposed sports facility, which is coordinated by the Planning Commission, will in all likelihood take several months to complete. If you have questions about the status of the review or if you would like information on the next public hearing, please call the Planning Department at 284-1976.



Lafayette's Own 'Field of Dreams'

The playing fields at Lafayette's new 68-acre community park were sodded in November and the grass has begun establishing itself. Come spring, the fields will be ready for the start of baseball season. The fields are funded by the Little League, the Lafayette Moraga Youth Association (LMYA), the Community Parklands Foundation and the City, at a total cost of approximately $700,000. Funds are still needed for water fountains, restrooms, bleachers, parking lot paving and a bridge to link the park with the Community Center. To donate, you can send a check to the Lafayette Community Parklands Foundation, P.O. Box 487, Lafayette, CA 94549. Donations are tax deductible. If you have questions, please call Foundation President Mike Collier at 283-9073.

Commission Formed To Promote New Business

If you have enjoyed a warm bagel at Noah's in the Plaza shopping center, you can thank Don Jenkins, chair of Lafayette's new Economic Development Commission. In addition to helping lure Noah's to Lafayette, Jenkins has been on a four-year quest to form an economic development group to bring more desirable businesses to Lafayette.

In June, the Economic Development Commission was officially sanctioned by the Lafayette City Council. This newly formed commission will focus on attracting new businesses that suit the style of Lafayette and the needs of its residents.

"The mission of this commission is to secure businesses that are a good fit for the community and also complement existing trade," says Jenkins, a former Chamber of Commerce president. "As the City faces tighter and tighter budgets, we need new businesses that generate sales tax revenue."

The all-volunteer commission is made up of six Lafayette residents and business owners. In addition to Jenkins, commissioners include: Vice Chair Val Weaver, a former member of the Economic Development Task Force; Sereta Churchil, a realtor for Heritage/Better Homes and Gardens and former president of the Contra Costa Board of Realtors; John Biestman, vice president of First Interstate Bank in San Francisco; Thomas Cleveland of CPA Management and Capital Group and a former mayor and council member; Michael Gilson, senior vice president of Agroworks; and John Baker, a local golf course developer.

Unlike the Chamber of Commerce, which is made up of private business people who perform a multitude of community-enriching functions and is an entity separate from the City, the Economic Development Commission has one focused objective and reports its progress to the City Council. The commission meets monthly, and all meetings are open to the public.

An annual budget of $12,000 supports the commission. These funds will be used for community promotions, market analysis, an annual tour for commercial realtors, and a brochure designed to sell the benefits of Lafayette to potential businesses. In addition, commission members will use their business contacts to seek out new opportunities for Lafayette.

The commission has already received many suggestions from residents, including attempting to attract a men's clothing store or a specialty food retailer such as Trader Joe's. Residents are urged to participate in the Economic Development Commission's work by calling Don Jenkins at 284-2220 or City Liaison Albert Carlson at the Planning Department, 284-1976.

Road & Drain Progress Report

#	Project Name (not in priority order)
A	Acalanes Rd: Hidden Valley Rd to City limits
B	Acalanes Rd: El Nido Ranch Rd to Hidden Valley Rd; Marianne Dr, Valente Ct
C	Avalon Ave / Solana Dr / Acampo Dr / Hamlin Rd
D	Condit Rd
E	Deer Hill Rd: First St to Pleasant Hill Rd
F	Dewing Ave / Boyer Circle
G	Diablo Circle / Middle Rd
H	Dolores Dr: Mt. Diablo Blvd to Highway 24
I	Doreen Way
J	Dyer Dr Storm Drain
K	El Curtola Blvd
L	El Nido Ranch Rd: Mt. Diablo Blvd to Hwy 24 Ramps
M	First St: School St to Golden Gate Way, Moraga Blvd, Moraga Rd to Victoria Ave
N	Glen Rd / No. Thompson Rd / Oak Hill Rd / Orchard Rd
O	Glenside Dr: St. Mary's Rd to Reliez Station Rd
P	Goyak Dr
Q	Hampton Rd / Woodland Way / Walnut Dr
R	Happy Valley Rd: Upper Happy Valley Rd to Deer Hill Rd
S	Hidden Valley Rd
T	Los Arabis Dr
U	Los Palos Dr
V	Martino Rd
W	Moraga Blvd: Victoria Ave to Carol Lane
X	Mosswood Dr / Webb Lane
Y	Mt. View Dr: Mt. Diablo Blvd to Brook St
Z	No. Peardale Dr / Camino Vallecito / So. Peardale Dr
AA	Old Tunnel Rd
BB	Ortega St / Perales St / Palomares St
CC	Quandt Rd
DD	Reliez Valley Rd: Pleasant Hill Rd to Silver Dell Rd
EE	Reliez Valley Road: Silver Dell Rd to City limits
FF	Rohrer Dr
GG	Sibert Ct
HH	Sierra Vista / Robles Ct / Serrano Ct
II	Springhill Rd
JJ	St. Mary's Rd at Driftwood
KK	St. Mary's Rd: Glenside Dr to Rohrer Dr
LL	St. Mary's Rd: Rohrer Dr to City Limits
MM	Sweet Dr
NN	Upper Happy Valley Rd
OO	Windsor Dr

Partially Completed or Under Design Completed

Work has been completed on several projects funded by the Road & Drain Tax.

Around Town

Winter & Spring **LAFAYETTE LIBRARY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN** – Over 450 Lafayette households and civic organizations have already contributed $15,000 to help keep the fiscally-strapped Lafayette Library open for 10 additional hours per week. The City matches every dollar contributed, up to a maximum of $25,000. To contribute, send a check to the Friends of the Lafayette Library, 952 Moraga Road, Lafayette, CA 94549.

Jan. 5 **MAYOR'S "STATE OF THE CITY" ADDRESS AND BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR DINNER** – Come honor Don Jenkins, former Chamber of Commerce President and hear the new mayor speak. 7:00 pm, Lafayette Park Hotel – $35. Reservations or information: 284-7404.

Jan. 8 **WINTER RECREATION PROGRAM** – Lafayette's Parks and Recreation Department presents a wide variety of programs for adults and children alike. Register at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. For more information, call 284-2232.

Jan. 6, 20 **USED BOOK SALE** – Calling all bookworms! The Friends of the Lafayette Library have thousands of used books from which to choose and purchase. Or, clean out your shelves and donate your spare volumes. All sales benefit the Lafayette Library. 9:00 am to Noon on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, Lafayette Community Center.

Jan. 22 **PUBLIC SAFETY CONSOLIDATION** – The City Council will hold a special public hearing on a proposal to combine police and fire services in Lafayette. All residents are welcome. 7:00 pm, Lafayette Community Center.

Jan. 25 **"VALENTINE SPECIAL" FOR THE LAMORINDA SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM** – Enroll in the Lamorinda School Bus Program by January 25th and your kids ride free in February! Call School Bus Coordinator Donna Kaufman at 284-1968 for more information.

Jan. 27 **PARENT'S NIGHT OUT** – Drop your kids (3½ – 9 yrs old) off at the Lafayette Community Center between 6:30 and 10:30 pm and enjoy a night on the town. This popular program is available on the last Saturday night of each month. Cost: $16 for first child, $10 for the second. To sign up, or for more information, call 284-2232.

Mar. 1 **NEW AUTOMATED GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SERVICE BEGINS** – Starting March 1, garbage will be collected by BFI and recyclables by Valley Waste Management. Residents will receive new, wheeled containers – provided at no cost – that will make it easy to roll garbage to the street for automated collection. Or, you can pay an extra $6/month for backyard service. The automated system will reduce monthly rates by up to 36%. If you have questions regarding the new service, please call 603-1144.

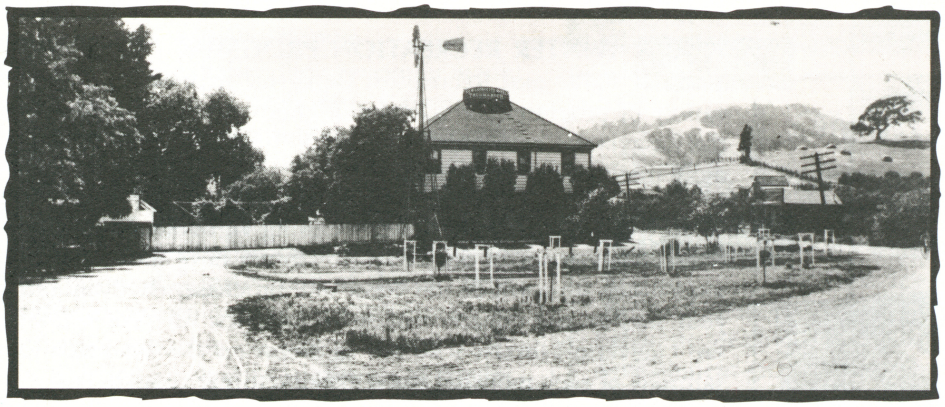
Mar. 9 **WHICH POTHOLES GET FIXED IN NINETY-SIX?** – The City Council will hold a special Saturday meeting to plan the 1996 Capital Improvement Program. All public welcome. 9:00 am to noon, Lafayette Community Center.

Historic Snapshots

Part 3: Pony Express, Plaza Park, Lumbering Leaves Lafayette

In the 1860s, Lafayette grew at a pedestrian's pace. The nearby San Antonio redwoods had been depleted and the lumber industry left Lafayette. The small commercial core and social gathering place of the community centered around Plaza Park. A tavern, hotel, blacksmith shop and general merchandise store with a post office and subscription library were supported by the local grain farmers.

The most historic event that occurred in Lafayette in the early 1860s was its link to the Pony Express, the new mail service between St. Joseph, Missouri and Sacramento. Once the Pony Express reached Sacramento, the mail was carried by boat to San Francisco. When the rider was late, however, the ferry sailed without him. From Sacramento, a tardy rider was forced to travel over land and take short ferry hops to reach San Francisco in order to stay within the promised 10-day schedule. In its 19 months of operation, the Pony Express stopped in Lafayette 19 times to pick up a fresh horse before riding on to Oakland.



The corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Road looks a little different today. Pictured here is Plaza Park in the early 1900s. The Lafayette Hotel sits in the background.

In 1864, Lafayette founder Elam Brown deeded Plaza Park, then five times larger than its present size, to the community. Unaffected by the Civil War in the east, local folks spent their days farming and, on balmy evenings, holding social functions. For years, the park was just a grassy patch of land where townsfolk met. It wasn't until around 1900 that the park was landscaped and fenced to prevent the young men of Lafayette from having dusty horse races around its perimeter.

In the late 1850s, Canadian blacksmith Peter Thompson came to Lafayette. In 1864, Thompson bought the local blacksmith shop from Jack Elson and, for nearly 50 years, Thompson plied his trade. Over the years, Thompson became a well-known member of the community. Early every Sunday, he would go to the church and build a fire inside so parishioners would be warm for the morning service.

Thompson was also known for his merrymaking. When the Civil War ended, Thompson made the local announcement by "touching off" his blacksmith's anvil with gun powder. In 1876, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Thompson shot off his anvil 48 times. The anvil eventually broke in two, but was bolted back together and used by Thompson and his son, William, until 1910. The anvil now sits repaired and on display in the Lafayette library.

Photos printed courtesy of the Lafayette Library Historical Archives.
Thanks to Bill Wakeman and the Lafayette Historical Society for their ongoing contributions to this series.
To join the Lafayette Historical Society, send $10 to P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, CA 94549

City Directory

Leave your Council Members a message on the City's new voice mail system! Call 299-3232

NEW

Officers

		EXT.
Judy Garvens	**Mayor**	**272**
Donald L. Tatzin	**Vice Mayor**	**274**
Anne Grodin	**Council Member**	**273**
Gayle B. Uilkema	**Council Member**	**270**
Erling Horn	**Council Member**	**271**

For messages to **all** Council Members: **907**

The City Council meets at 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Monday of the month at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road.

Staff

Robert F.D. Adams	**City Manager**
Steven B. Falk	**Assist. City Manager**
Niroop K. Srivatsa	**Comm. Dev. Director**
Mark Lander	**City Engineer**
Mike Henn	**Planning Serv. Mgr.**
Jennifer Russell	**Parks and Recreation Director**
Ed McNair	**Public Works Supt.**
Sue Jusaitis	**City Clerk**
Gregg Moore	**Police Services Mgr.**

City Offices and Police

Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968 Lafayette, CA 94549-1968**

City Telephone Numbers

Administration:	**284-1968**
Engineering:	**284-1951**
Planning:	**284-1976**
Parks and Rec:	**284-2232**
Public Works:	**283-6271**
Senior Services:	**284-5050**
Police Business:	**284-5010**
Police Emergency:	**911**
Voice Mail System:	**299-3232**

LAFAYETTE VISTAS

is published for the residents of Lafayette and reports on issues, people and events that affect our city. As a member of this community, you are encouraged to contact us with your questions and comments. We request all correspondence be sent to:

Steven Falk, Editor, Lafayette Vistas
City of Lafayette
P.O. Box 1968, Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
510-284-1968 • FAX: 510-284-3169
On-Line: Lafay1968@aol.com

LAFAYETTE

City of Lafayette
P.O. Box 1968
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 161
Lafayette, CA

Postal Customer
Lafayette, CA 94549

Printed on Recycled Paper